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spurs, and rollicking manner, coming in the most quiet, dignified way imaginable. There are but two unmarried young women within a radius of thirty-five miles of Glendo, one living six miles and the other sixteen miles from town, and these two are extremely popular. As for young men, there are any number of eligibles living in this vicinity, owning more or less property, and most of them having a college education.

All of the ranchers called me by name as soon as they saw me. At first I wondered at it, but came to the conclusion that as I was the only strange woman on horseback who had been up that way for a long time, it was but natural that they should recognize me after they had learned that I was due there.

After arranging for placing a traveling library station in the Glendo postoffice, chatting with the ranchers, and snatching about four hours of sleep at the tiny frontier hotel, I saddled and mounted Joker about two-thirty in the morning, in order to avoid the heat and electrical storms prevalent later in the day, and "struck the home-trail" for Wheatland. It was too early for breakfast when I arrived at Junction, so stopping just long enough for Joker to have a good feed of oats, I rode on, reaching Wheatland after a ride of fifty miles, at ten o'clock.

No traveling library was established at Grant, about twenty-five miles south-west of Wheatland, as all of the ranchers there are well-to-do and motor to Wheatland at least once a week in their own cars, so that it is easy for them to secure their books from the main library.

Not long ago I was greatly surprised as well as amused when a library director in the northern part of Wyoming, upon requesting a library organizer for her county, required: "A young woman who is not only a college graduate with library school training and experience but in addition must be able to get along with Western people, ride and drive, as well as pack a horse, follow a trail, shoot straight, run an automobile, and be able to 'rough it' whenever necessary!" Now, it has been proved that those qualifications all come in as a part of the business, as well as the fun of organizing in Wyoming.

We haven't a fine Carnegie building, nor a large expensive collection—they will come later—but we have a trained librarian, Miss Fenton, who has had some experience, and a broad-minded and liberal board of directors. Our collection, though small, is exceptionally well circulated, and best of all, we are gaining the good will and confidence of all residents of Platte County, even to the professional grouches!

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AS AFFECTED BY MUNICIPAL RETRENCHMENT

BY FREDERICK C. HICKS, *Law Librarian, Columbia University*

When at the request of the president, this study of the relation of municipal retrenchment to the financial problems of public libraries was undertaken, I was under the impression that there had been such general and marked reduction in support of public libraries that something like a crisis in library affairs had been reached. There had been public notice of a number of instances of retrenchment, and these had in the minds of many brought a state of unrest. What is the matter with

democracy, they asked, if the library is always the first to suffer in time of financial stress? Is not the library an integral part of public education, and education the bulwark of liberty, and liberty the watchword of democracy? If we were in the midst of a campaign for the establishment of a public library we would all answer yes, with a flourish; but such a reply would serve no useful purpose today. We must not declare Miss Democracy faithless unless we can support the accusation with

facts; and this I have been unable to do. The results of a questionnaire addressed to librarians in every state may be summarized as follows: During the last year there has been a general reduction in support of public libraries in five states. In three states, Oregon, Tennessee and Mississippi the reduction is attributed to general financial depression; in Washington, to a decision of the Supreme Court making effective an act which limits library expenditures in cities of the third class to one-fourth of a mill on the dollar; and in Ohio, to a law passed five years ago placing an absolute limit of fifteen mills on the dollar on municipal expenditures for all purposes including public libraries. In five other states (Alabama, Illinois, Minnesota, New York and Pennsylvania), there have been notable special instances of reduction in support; while in the five states first mentioned some libraries have suffered much more than others in the same states. Although the unhappy situation in which several of these libraries found themselves is the result of unbusinesslike city management, or of "graft," or mere failure to take the library's needs seriously, there are signs of public awakening in the comments of the press. For instance, after commenting on the meager appropriations for the Youngstown, Ohio, Public Library, a local paper says: "The first thing we know some of our critics will be tracing a connection between the East Youngstown riots and the neglect of our library. Which reminds us, that the Youngstown Sheet & Tube Company could not do a better or a wiser thing than to give \$15,000 or \$20,000 to the public library with the condition attached that a branch should be opened in the vicinity of its works. Books are better than policemen under such conditions as prevail in the East End." The opposite view was taken by an alderman of Columbus, Ohio, in debate on the apportionment of the city deficit of \$320,000. He argued "that it would be better to have the people do without books than to have the city subjected to a 'reign of crime,' and urged using the

\$10,000 which the library needs, to pay city policemen." As fair-minded librarians we are forced to admit that in the present state of affairs, national and international, it is an open question whether the policeman or the bibliophile is more potent for good. It depends on the point of view, and whether we speak of this generation or the next. Other instances there are of diminution of support for libraries of national repute whose affairs have been given much publicity; but when all the facts are judicially surveyed, it does not appear that there has been any general change of sentiment unfavorable to libraries, giving ground for widespread misgiving in the library world. There is partial support of this conclusion in a pamphlet issued in February, 1916, by the U. S. Bureau of Census, which gives "Comparative financial statistics of cities under council and commission government, 1913 and 1915." For these two years statistics of 24 cities are given, eight under council government, eight under commission government, and eight which have changed from the council to the commission form. Although the average per capita expenditures for libraries in the eight cities under council government have decreased from 20 to 19 cents, the expenditures for libraries under commission government have increased, in the first group from 12 to 15 cents, and in the second, from 10 to 15 cents. The full significance of these figures cannot be known until the complete report of the Census Bureau on "Financial statistics of cities having a population of over 30,000 in 1915" has come from the press; but if they are typical, there has been a slight reduction in library expenditures in cities governed by mayor and council; and a much larger increase in commission government cities. And when we realize that 85 out of the 195 cities, having between 30,000 and 500,000 population are now governed by commissions and that the number is rapidly increasing, the outlook is decidedly encouraging. The general testimony of librarians is that commission government is favorable to library develop-

ment because there are fewer men to convince.

It is not wise, however, to be unduly optimistic. Retrenchment is very real in character when appropriations stand still and no provision is made for normal growth. There is retrenchment also when appropriations for libraries do not increase evenly with appropriations for other municipal activities. Referring again to the statistics of the 24 cities above mentioned we find reason for inferring that there is a tendency to minimize the importance of public libraries. Whereas the average per capita expenditures for libraries in council cities have decreased, the expenditures for all other purposes have increased, and in the other two groups the increase for libraries is not equal to the increase for the police, fire, charities and education departments. Moreover there are very large areas in the United States where municipal retrenchment could not possibly affect public libraries, either because there are no libraries or because their existence has never been recognized in a financial way by municipalities. These are disquieting facts. It is the essence of Democracy that she must bow to the will of the majority. Is it the will of the majority that public libraries shall not exist at all, or that they shall exist only by the bounty of individuals, or that they shall be supported publicly only in a timorous manner? Were it not for the fact that the popular voice changes its tone under the influence of leadership the answer from some states would be in the affirmative. For instance, in answer to my questionnaire, the former president of the now defunct Louisiana State Library Association wrote, "There is no state appropriation for public libraries, never has been, nor likely to be any; nor is there any tax levied by municipalities, nor is there likely to be any." But on the other hand, in Alabama, where schools as well as libraries are at a premium there is now going on a determined campaign against illiteracy; while North Carolina, already alive to library values, has adopted the slogan "A public library in every town

by 1920." The leaders to stimulate the will of the majority must come from the library profession. And our work must be systematic as well as enthusiastic. May we not, therefore, find profit in considering for a few moments not only means of preventing retrenchment, but methods of initiating and then insuring a minimum of support.

Funds for the establishment and maintenance of public libraries come from one or more of the following sources, viz: endowments, gifts for specified purposes, rent of lecture halls, over-due book fines, duplicate pay collections, license fees, police court fines, state grants and local taxation, the latter to be applied directly, or as a subsidy, or to meet a contract obligation with an existing library. The moving power of a check for \$50,000, with or without conditions attached, need not be dilated upon, and we all are deeply conscious of the debt which the library world owes to a host of generous donors. They have hastened the establishment and growth of libraries throughout the land. They have taught the State by example. In them the voice of leaders is heard, but not the will of the majority. For that will we must look to enactments of the representatives of the people in state, county and city. And this voice speaks most significantly when it takes no note of existing endowment funds, or library subsidies made on the basis of circulation or of contract obligations existing between a city and a private library. If the right of a people to tax themselves for public library support is limited because individuals have been generous, or because there are libraries in being whose facilities can be had by the payment of a contract price, the incentive to individuals to be generous is taken away, while on the other hand, the tax-paying body is discouraged from raising its own library above those of less fortunate neighboring cities.

Constitutions and general laws applicable to a whole commonwealth are the most positive evidences of democratic will. When a state regulates education by general laws it is considered an evidence of

advanced civilization. General library laws are, therefore, proper products of state legislation. A recent pamphlet by Edna D. Bullock on "State supported library activities in the United States" (Nebraska Legislative Reference Bureau, Bulletin No. 9), gives the facts concerning library agencies, such as state and historical society libraries and library commissions which are supported directly by the state as a part of its central organization. Impressive as these activities are, especially in the field of library extension, and the traveling library, they are less important than activities developed under general laws which determine what the various local governmental units of society must, or may, or shall not do in relation to libraries.

In only one state do we find a definite constitutional provision concerning public libraries. Article 11, section 6, of the Michigan constitution says that "the legislature shall provide by law for the establishment of at least one library in each township and city; and all fines assessed and collected in the several counties, cities and townships for any breach of the penal laws shall be exclusively applied to the support of such libraries." Although the word "shall" is used, the laws passed by the legislature are permissive rather than mandatory. Moreover the courts have interpreted the clause relating to fines to mean those resulting from breach of the penal laws of the state, excluding those collected for the breach of city ordinances. We find, therefore, that only libraries established under the school law and thus under the control of the Superintendent of Public Instruction receive support from penal fines.

On the other hand, the legislatures of every state have passed general acts concerning public libraries. It is obvious that an intelligent idea of the underlying conditions affecting library support cannot be gained without a knowledge of these laws. Having examined the provisions of those laws relating to taxation, it is necessary through printed reports and correspond-

ence to learn something of their operation, and of modifying legislation by local governing bodies. In any study of library support the latter is a very important element. In many states, cities granted special charters are freed from the limitations of the general library laws. These charters then have the same relation to city ordinances that constitutions do to state laws. For library purposes, charters and city ordinances are still unexplored territory, the surveying of which might show important discoveries. Especially is this true since "home rule" has been emphasized. Any generalizations that have been made hereafter might, therefore, be considerably modified if they were based on an examination of charters and city ordinances as well as state laws.

The extremes of state-wide library legislation are found, first in those states, which, like Alabama, merely confer on cities and towns "the right to establish and maintain public libraries," without otherwise defining or limiting that right; and second, in the state of New Hampshire, where the selectmen in each town are commanded annually to assess and levy a ratable tax for the maintenance of a public library even though no such library exists. In the latter case the annual appropriations are held in trust and allowed to accumulate until a public library has been established. As a result libraries have been established in all except twelve towns, while it is only a question of time when there will be a public library in every town in the state. Between these extremes lie many variations in methods of library support. These I have attempted to summarize. In some states a source from which money may or must be drawn is designated. In Kentucky one-half of the net proceeds, and in Colorado and Washington the total proceeds of police court fines may be used for libraries. The constitutional provision in Michigan has already been mentioned. This is a device which places the librarian in an awkward position since it is to his interest to have crime increase in order that fines may be

larger. License fees, designated in Washington, are open to the same objection, but not so with the dog tax which is a source of library revenue in Massachusetts. Such devices perhaps insure a minimum of support, but it is to direct local taxation that we must look for results. The most popular device is to set a maximum limit to the rate without setting any minimum limit. Thirty-five states have done this for certain classes of their administrative divisions, the maximum rate varying from $\frac{1}{8}$ of a mill to 5 mills on the dollar. Next in popularity is a combination of a mandatory minimum and a permissive maximum. Six states use this device, the mandatory minimum varying from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{5}{8}$ of a mill, and the permissive maximum from $\frac{5}{8}$ of a mill to 1 mill. Only one state, New Hampshire, has a mandatory minimum, with no maximum. Another variation may be termed a sliding scale, by which a city is either permitted or commanded to raise designated amounts depending on some condition precedent, such as the assessed valuation, or the rate of school taxation, or the amount of support received from the state. The limits of taxation are usually designated in mills, but in a few states a poll tax is preferred. It must be noted also that usually there is a different rate for cities of different classes, and for counties, townships and other districts. In general it may be said that the rates of taxation as designated by state law, are lower for large cities than for small cities, and lower for counties than for cities. Ordinarily the actual rate of taxation that is to be levied within the limitations of the law, is determined by the local legislative body, whether it be a council, commission, board of county commissioners, or a town meeting. But in some states the rate is determined by the electorate, either at a special or a general election. When so fixed it cannot be changed until another election is held. Sometimes the school board has power to fix the rate; and in three states, Indiana, Iowa, and South Dakota, the library board has exclusive power.

Since our purpose is to consider means

of procuring and insuring adequate support for public libraries, it would be helpful if we could determine which of the several methods of regulating library tax rates is most desirable. Is it better to make no regulations at all, or to set merely a permissive maximum limit, or to have a mandatory minimum limit, or to have a minimum combined with a permissive maximum? A Massachusetts librarian would answer in favor of home rule, secure in the consciousness that in his state libraries are almost as numerous as churches. A very few librarians would strike the very ground from under our feet by asserting not only that tax legislation is of doubtful value, but that an occasional decrease in appropriations is a wholesome thing because it necessitates needed housecleaning. A Virginia enthusiast would heartily desire a law based on New Hampshire's, which forces the creation of library funds in every town. Most librarians, however, would say that neither Massachusetts nor New Hampshire should be taken as a model. Some regulation, they would say, is helpful, but not too much. They would then be called upon to decide between the two remaining classes. To those who prefer a permissive maximum, on the ground that it leaves greater freedom of action and is a goal for which a library may work, a further question must be put. What should the maximum be? Should it be $\frac{1}{8}$ of a mill or 5 mills; and what distinction should be made between cities of the various classes, and counties, townships, etc.? Existing library laws would not provide the answer. Another group of librarians would declare themselves in favor of a mandatory minimum tax on the ground that it insures continuous support on a known basis. They would say that it is a solid rock on which a library can be built; and their secondary care would be to have the permissive maximum made as high as possible. Answers to the questionnaire which I sent out show that wherever there is a mandatory minimum its continuance is favored. It is pointed out that in bad times the library is secure; while at all

other times it may count on a gradual increase as wealth and population increase. The majority of libraries not now having a mandatory minimum rate would fear to have one specified. They think that such a minimum rate would usually be made the actual maximum; and they give as examples the failure of city councils to appropriate for maintenance more than the specified 10% of the cost of Carnegie library buildings. Others give a qualified approval of the mandatory provision, advocating it for the weaker community, or for states where the library movement has not yet gathered strength, and favoring home-rule in more advanced communities.

For each method of library support there are plausible if not convincing arguments. But we must not overlook a fundamental fact. All taxation for libraries depends not only on the rate of taxation, but on the rate of assessment, and the kind of property to which the rate applies. A few states specify assessment of all taxable property, both real and personal, at full value. Others have a different provision for real and personal property, as in Illinois, where real property is assessed at $\frac{2}{3}$ value, and personal property at full value. For the most part assessment is at part value, varying from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$. But even where full value is required, there is no guaranty that such assessment will be made. The personal equation here operates with full vigor. Moreover, a change from one method of assessment to another may nullify the effect of the most mandatory provision for library support. Some cities in Missouri have suffered a reduction for this reason during the last year. On the other hand, Utah has nearly doubled the assessed value of its city property, by a recent change in the general tax law. The rate of taxation was correspondingly decreased; but the section providing for the library levy was overlooked. The result is that the Salt Lake City library has an appropriation for the present year of \$64,000 instead of \$29,000.

We are all convinced of the necessity for adequate support of public libraries. We

consider ourselves members of a profession devoted to a great cause; and we hold ourselves out as experts capable of guiding the destiny of libraries. Our library commissions and state libraries are giving intelligent attention to their particular problems. And we are now assembled in national convention to consider the relation of libraries to democracy. Suppose we were asked, as an organization, to advise the legislature of a state in framing a general library law which would insure adequate support. What would be our answer? Can anyone tell? I do not overlook the informing article on this subject by Mr. Franklin F. Hopper (A. L. A. Proceedings, 1911) when I say that the problem has not been solved. Personally, I quote with approval his concluding statement that "the only way in which a library may be sure of continuously progressive support in proportion to growth of population and increase of library needs, is to secure either by state law or city charter a certain minimum millage of the annual tax levy, such minimum to be adequate for at least the essential needs of an efficient library, and to be determined in the first place by the amount needed to reach the present population, and by the necessary modifications of property values, character of population, plan and number of library buildings." But as has been shown, there is still no general agreement on this method, and we do not know how to work this plan out in detail. We still leave each librarian to fight his own battle. And up to a certain point this should always be; for librarians must be a race of leaders directing the course of democracy. But can we give him help on this confusing and all important question? The proportion of public librarians who are members of this Association is overwhelming. There is a library trustees' section, a League of Library Commissions, and a Special Libraries Association, among the members of which are many municipal and legislative reference librarians. A committee of the American Library Association is co-oper-

ating with the National Municipal League in drafting the library section of a proposed model city charter. All of the above are vitally interested in legislation for the support of public libraries. May we hope that through their united efforts, not hastily but after much travail, there may be drawn up a statement of underlying prin-

ciples of library legislation to which this Association may give its approval, and which may serve as a guide to city councils and commissions and state legislatures? If so, one step will have been taken toward securing continuous adequate support for libraries and minimizing the evils of municipal retrenchment.

THE LARGER PUBLICITY OF THE LIBRARY

BY JOSEPH L. WHEELER, *Librarian, Youngstown Public Library*

At this late date, when librarianship has been an organized profession for forty years, we are making a small beginning in what always has been and always will be an important part of our work. If the goal of the library is to get as many good books read as possible; if the function of the librarian is to get two books read where only one was read before; then library publicity is an ordinary, legitimate activity, calling for our best interest and effort. For, no matter how good his service, the librarian can never hope to reach the mass of the people without advertising his wares.

That this is true, proof may be found in some of our well thumbed pages of library statistics, which show that even in those cities where the libraries are working for larger use of books, less than a fifth of the people are enrolled as library users. We have only begun to do library work, after these forty years. If we omit all of the population which is unable to read in any language, which is too young, too ill, too handicapped by distance and circumstance, to use the libraries in our cities and towns, can we prove to anyone that we have made much progress in our dealings with the remaining large part of the population?

The time may come when the technique of getting books read will be taught in library schools, along with instruction in marking numbers on their backs. One may arise among us and teach us the psychology of our profession, the appeal of colored book-covers, the lure of the book-line that

reaches out to the sidewalk, the cause and cure of the craving for "something new," the origin of dull seasons and rush hours, the mind of him who comes for a light novel and takes away a biography of power and inspiration. Publicity is nothing more than the study of human nature, followed by a carefully planned appeal to it. A man in any other work or business would tell us that if we librarians hope to achieve a greater use of books, we should make more study of human nature, and more appeal to it.

A feeling still lingers in some corners that library publicity is a fad, a side-issue, a running after newspaper glory and large figures of circulation. It is true that we still are so elated over the publication of a booklist, circular, or news story, that our delight must often appear elementary even to our fellow workers. But it is not true that library publicity aims at size rather than quality of circulation, or that circulation of books is a less worthy object than their use in the library building. Why not assume that publicity can increase both quality and quantity of reading, that it can make steady book users out of persons who have previously used books but little, that it can be directed to building up reference work itself?

One thinks first of the publicity which works directly for a larger use of books. Even more important, in some respects, and in the long run, is the publicity which works for a larger public understanding of the library itself, and what it is trying to